

DALLAS COUNTY

Honorable R.E. Armstrong, III

Dallas County Courthouse
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Selma, AL 36701
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Marilyn Rawls
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Marilyn Bennett
Ocie Acoff
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Ernest Tate
Frank Hardy
Renda F. Thomas
Tammy Maul
James Carter
Alisa Brooks

Vista Volunteer: Cliff Chestnut

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Family Resource Center
2. Decrease math and reading deficiencies.
3. Transportation

Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county.

Health - Children's (0 - 19) physical and mental well-being in the county.

Lack of access to health facilities

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Develop local transportation
- Ask physicians to dedicate one day or specific times for Medicaid patients
- Medication

Lack of pediatric specialists

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Contact local pediatric doctor and contract with them (discussing the needs of our children)

Education

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Community collaboration
- Educate the public to bring awareness on health and education
- Forming partnership with local health care providers

Safety - Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

Reduce the illegal access to weapons & reduce crime

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Create a Family Service Center
- Public Service Announcements (geared to Hip Hop stations done by teens/mentors/victims)
- Teen Town Hall meetings
- Door to Door community outreach
- Mandatory group sessions for kids under the court's supervision
- Lack of supervision of minors/set and impose a curfew
- Gangs and gang related activities
- Decrease violent crime rate
- Proper placement and referrals for youth offenders/juvenile placement
- Establish detention facility

Education - Children learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

Decrease Reading/Math Deficiency in Selma and Dallas County

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Collaborate with community-based and other stakeholders (i.e. community-based organizations, business, parents, etc.) to establish mentoring, tutoring and enrichment programs to address identified needs
- Outline and implement specific strategies (i.e. training, mentoring, HIPPPY, parent friendly climate, etc.) that will provide parents with the knowledge and skills needed to provide academic assistance to students
- Implement specific strategies (i.e. employ Highly Qualified (HQ)) area; use research-based reading and math programs; assign curriculum specialists to high needs schools; use appropriate teacher observations and evaluations; use mentoring programs for teachers; employ outside evaluators in key areas; monitor achievement using formative assessments, etc.) that will significantly incrementally improve student achievement as measured by annual accountability measures (DIBELS, ARMT, SAT-10, AHSGE, ACT, SAT, etc.)
- Train and encourage stakeholders (superintendents, principals, supervisors, teachers, etc.) to aggregate and disaggregate data to make data driven decisions that are in the best interest of the students and other stakeholders
- Seek Resources and programs to reduce the number of students who are at risk (drop-out, expelled, teen

pregnancy, truant, etc.) from Selma City and Dallas County Schools

Lack of appropriate accommodations and related services for special need students

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Provide early intervention services for identifying special needs students
- Provide training for all stakeholders, teachers, parents regarding federal guidelines for special needs students IDEA and section 504
- Provide training at the local level to all stakeholders in the following areas: parent rights, referral to eligibility process, IEP team and eligibility team responsibilities and composition, IEP process, use of assistive technology and accommodations, disciplining students with disabilities, guidelines for providing related services for special needs students, and other key areas
- Provide the most appropriate least restrictive environment (LRE) for students with disabilities, create and provide support systems for special needs students
- Provide on-going staff development for administrators, teachers, parents and stakeholders at the local level

Transportation

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Work to make public transportation available in the city and county to assist youths and citizens to and from training sessions and work
- Continue to use the system's transportation during school
- Collaborate with other agencies to provide transportation for after-school activities

Early Care and Education - Children (0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

Identify children in need of Early Intervention and Services provided by Children's Rehab Services

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Utilize Alabama Dept. of Rehabilitation Services Early Intervention, Children's Rehabilitation, and Adult Vocational Rehabilitation Services for children and adults with disabilities

Increase awareness, referrals of professional service providers to the Alabama Early Intervention System

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Public awareness with medical community, parents, legislators, agencies, school systems, organizations, etc.
- Parental involvement
- Educate and collaborate with local health care providers and physicians to make referrals and to understand the importance of early intervention services

Increase number of health care providers for children in Dallas County

Policy Council Action Steps:

Recruit healthcare providers for Dallas County, i.e. pediatric OT's, PT's, speech pathologist, Social Workers, pediatric specialists i.e. orthopedist, hearing, vision, etc.

Economic Security

- Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

Summer Youth Employment

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Contact County Commissioners and City Council Members regarding Summer Youth Work Programs
- Ask the City/Council to allocate monies in their budgets to fund Summer Youth Work Programs
- Educate businesses and promote involvement in Summer Youth Work Programs
- Designate a certain number of slots for Summer Youth Work Programs for children with special needs
- Identify providers for job-readiness training
- Provide job readiness training for candidates in the Summer Youth Work Programs

Transportation

Policy Council Action Steps:

Money Management

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Need training program for parents and children on how to manage money and stay out of debt

Parent Involvement

and Skills - Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

Increase parental involvement in schools

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Provide community awareness programs
- Obtain funding for parent projects that work with at-risk families of school children

- Provide parenting classes through our schools and community based programs
- Encourage parent participation in PTO/PTA organizations

Provide mentoring programs to help families in need of assistance

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Educate parents about how to watch for symptoms of abuse (i.e. physical, sexual and emotional and verbal)
- Organize task force of community service agencies to develop a county-wide parenting program
- Coordinate efforts between local school systems and businesses to

support a partnership with the Selma City and Dallas County Schools

Teach appropriate parenting skills

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Provide on-going parenting classes with referrals from the schools, court system, mental health and other professional organizations
- Research and apply for grants for parenting classes that include funding to provide incentives for parents
- Encourage the sharing information and collaboration between agencies and the schools

Policy Recommendation

1. Legislature provide funding for Family Service Center and Detention Center in Dallas County.
2. DHR-Insure and increase funding for Black Belt providers counties such as Dallas County.

Accomplishments

1. Established Juvenile Conference Committee
2. Placement of VISTA Volunteer.
3. Summer employment and recreation program
4. Organizing county wide mentoring program
5. Incorporated and reorganizing CPC

Additional Dallas County Children's Policy Council Members:

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Michael W. Jackson
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